P·I·X·A·R

For Immediate Release:

PIXAR BEGINS SHIPMENT OF THE PIXAR IMAGE COMPUTER TO COMMERCIAL AND SCIENTIFIC MARKETS

Anaheim, California, May 11, 1986 -- Pixar today announced that it has started shipping the Pixar Image Computer to commercial and scientific markets. Pixar simultaneously announced that it has signed two multi-million dollar original equipment manufacturer (OEM) agreements with Symbolics Inc. of Cambridge, Massachusetts and Philips Medical Systems Inc. of Shelton, Connecticut. The announcements were made at the Computer Graphics '86 Conference and Exposition.

Symbolics is a leading developer, manufacturer and marketer of advanced computer systems for artificial intelligence and other symbolic processing applications. Philips Medical Systems, a North American Philips Company affiliated with N.V. Philips of the Netherlands, is a leading supplier of sophisticated diagnostic imaging and therapy systems for the medical community worldwide.

Ed Catmull, president of Pixar, said, "In our first 90 days as an independent company, we have begun shipment of production units and signed two major OEM agreements. We are pleased to have these key partners. Their expertise in developing and marketing products will help take Pixar into many of the markets and applications for which it is well suited."

(more)

The Pixar Image Computer

The Pixar Image Computer is a programmable, high-performance general-purpose graphics computer that generates and manipulates large digital images. Its architecture features a high-speed programmable processor integrated with a large picture memory.

The high-speed processor, called the Chap channel processor, has a powerful general-purpose instruction set. The programming language is block structured, much like a high-level language. The Chap channel processor contains four parallel processors organized in a single-instruction-multiple-data (SIMD) architecture. This architecture results in 40 million instructions per second (MIPS) performance.

Since it is fully programmable, it can be adapted for use in a wide range of markets and applications. It typically executes algorithms 200 times faster than a standard minicomputer.

The Pixar Image Computer also has a 24-megabyte, 2,000 by 2,000 pixel picture memory, expandable to 2,000 by 4,000 pixels. By contrast, typical image processing systems have a 1,000 by 1,000 pixel picture memory. The Pixar Image Computer's four, 12-bit memory channels can store 16 million monochrome pixels for black-and-white images or four million full-color pixels (red, green, blue and alpha) for full-color images. The alpha channel allows each pixel to carry extra information. For example, some software uses the alpha channel to store transparency information so that pictures can be merged without loss of image quality.

(more)

Price and Availability

The Pixar Image Computer is available for $122,000. The Pixar Development System, consisting of a Pixar Image Computer, a host workstation, disk drive, tape drive and software is available for $180,000. Pixar software includes a comprehensive development environment and software libraries for image processing and image manipulation.

Pixar designs and manufactures high-performance computers and software specifically tailored to state-of-the-art computer graphics and image processing applications. Pixar markets its products directly to research and development organizations, and through OEMs to markets such as medical imaging, geophysical analysis, government, graphic arts, and design and animation.

Formerly the Computer Graphics Division of Lucasfilm Ltd., Pixar was acquired by Steven P. Jobs and the employees of Pixar in February 1986. Pixar is based in San Rafael, California.